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JOHN BACON ESQ.R R.A.

MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN BACON, Esq. R.A.

WITH

REFLECTIONS

DRAWN FROM A REVIEW OF HIS

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

Non ſine ratione, ſacra eſt magnarum virtutum memoria: et eſſe plures bonos juvat, ſi gratia bonorum non cum ipſis cadat. SENECA.

By RICHARD CECIL, A. M.

Miniſter of St. John's Bedford Row, &c.

LONDON:

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[*R. Noble, Printer, Old Bailey.*]

Some additional facts and anecdotes furniſhed by the family enable the Author to enlarge the former brief narrative: he has alſo inſerted whatever he could recollect of Mr. B.'s habits in ſociety, turn of thinking, manner of expreſſion, &c. This addition will not only more diſtinctly mark his character, but afford a gratification to his friends.

The ſcantineſs of his other materials has allowed the Author to dwell longer on that part of his friend's character which is decidedly the moſt important; and to add thoſe obſervations at the concluſion on the nature and effect of true religion, which receive from it ſo ſtriking an exemplification.

MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN BACON, Esq.

TO encourage real Genius, ſtruggling againſt early diſadvantages; to prove the ſolid benefits of a ſteady Probity; and, above all, to exemplify the divine maxim, that *Wiſdom is juſtified of all her children*, the following ſhort Memoirs of the late John Bacon, Eſq. are preſented to the public.

This celebrated Sculptor was deſcended from an ancient family in Somerſetſhire: his Grandfather John Bacon was the Son of William Bacon, who poſſeſſed a conſiderable eſtate near Manſel in that county. His Father Thomas Bacon was

a cloth-worker in Southwark, where Mr. Bacon was born November 24th, 1740.

Providence ſeems to have peculiarly favoured his infancy; for when he was about five years of age, he fell into the pit of a Soap-boiler, and would have periſhed, if a man, who then entered the yard, had not diſcovered the top of his head, and immediately drawn him out. About the ſame time he fell before a cart, the wheel of which went over his right hand, and muſt have cruſhed it, had it not fallen between two projecting ſtones.

There are, perhaps, but few perſons who cannot recollect ſome impending dangers from which they have been ſnatched by a particular Providence. Such recollections not only become a duty with reſpect to our great Deliverer, but experience confirms the very beneficial tendency they have in affecting the heart, and pointing out its deep and various obligations.

When

When very young, Mr. B. diſcovered an inclination for drawing, common to children; but not purſuing it, he never made any great proficiency in that art.

He, indeed, at that time was obliged to ſeek a ſupport in the humbleſt ſtation, but even while a child, ſeeds of his future growth and eminence appeared. "I have often heard him mention" ſays his ſon, "that, when a boy under the age of ten years, and playing at marbles or other games, his thoughts have been chiefly employed in the enquiry, "whence aroſe the ſatisfaction he "felt?" and perceiving the weakneſs of its principle, his former pleaſure has been turned into contempt towards himſelf and his companions, as the eaſy dupes of fancy.—At this age, he concluded that happineſs was in every man's power who could learn to diſcipline his own mind; and on this plan he made a ſort of philoſophical attempt to command his own happineſs.

It, perhaps, need not be ſaid that Bacon, the old Chriſtian, excelled Bacon the young Philoſopher in his attempt to obtain true happineſs; and we may add that infant Philoſophers will attain to the *ſummum bonum* as ſoon as aged ones who are not taught to look to a better reſource than themſelves.

In the year 1755, and at the age of fourteen, Mr. B. was bound apprentice to Mr. Criſpe of Bow Church Yard; where he was employed, among other things, in painting on porcelain. Mr. Criſpe had a manufactory of china at Lambeth, to which Mr. B. occaſionally went, and where he aſſiſted. His then occupation, indeed, was but a feeble ſtep towards his future acquirements, as he was chiefly employed in forming ſhepherds, ſhepherdeſſes, and ſuch ſmall ornamental pieces; yet, for a ſelf-taught artiſt to perform even works like theſe with taſte, and, in leſs than two years, form (as he did) all the models for the manu-

manufactory, was to give an indication of no ordinary powers. But as goodness of heart excels greatneſs of parts, a proof of his filial affection ought here to be recorded: at this early period he principally ſupported his parents by the produce of his labours, even to the abridging himſelf of the neceſſaries of life.

Let children learn, not only from God's word, but alſo from facts like the preſent, how a dutiful and affectionate regard to their parents is marked by HIM on whom all events depend. It is ſowing the ſeeds of future bleſſings—It is laying a good ground of expectation reſpecting their own children. *Honour thy Father and Mother, that it may be well with thee.*

Mr. B.'s capacity, however, for greater things in his art than he had yet attempted, diſcovered itſelf on the following occaſion: in attending the manufactory at Lambeth, he had an opportunity of

of obſerving the models of different Sculptors which were ſent to a pottery on the ſame premiſes to be burnt. Small circumſtances often give riſe to the moſt important events in our lives. From the ſight of theſe models, Mr. B. firſt conceived a ſtrong inclination for his future profeſſion. He applied himſelf to this attainment with the moſt unremitting diligence; his progreſs was as rapid, as his turn for it was ſudden and unpremeditated. This will appear from the books publiſhed annually by the Society for the encouragement of Arts; where it may be found, that, between the years 1763 and 1766 incluſive, the firſt premiums in thoſe claſſes, for which he contended, were no leſs than nine times adjudged to him. The firſt of theſe attempts was made in the year 1758, in a ſmall figure of Peace, after the manner of the antique.

It was during Mr. B.'s apprenticeſhip that he formed a deſign of making Statues

Statues in Artificial Stone, which he afterwards perfected. By theſe exertions, he recovered the manufactory at Lambeth now carried on by Mrs. Coade; and which, before Mr. B. undertook the management of it, had fallen into very low circumſtances.

About the year 1763, Mr. B. firſt attempted working in marble; and having never ſeen that operation performed, he was led to invent an inſtrument for transferring the form of the model to the marble, (technically called, *getting out the points*) which inſtrument has ſince been uſed by many other Sculptors in England and France. Its advantage, beyond the inſtruments formerly employed, conſiſts in its certainty and exactneſs—in its taking a correct meaſurement in *every direction*—in its occupying ſo ſmall a compaſs as not to encumber the workman—and, that it may be transferred either to the model, or to the marble,

without

without having a ſeparate inſtrument for each, as before was the cuſtom.

At this time Mr. B. lived in the City, where his family connexions were, but in the year 1768 he removed to the weſt-end of the town; and it was then (being about twenty-eight years of age) in attending the Royal Academy, inſtituted that year, that he received his firſt inſtructions in his future profeſſion; having never before ſeen the art of Modelling or Sculpture regularly performed.

In the following year, the gold medal for Sculpture, the firſt ever given by that Society, was decreed to Mr. B. He became an Aſſociate of that body in the year 1770. His reputation was now well eſtabliſhed by the exhibition of his Statue of Mars; it recommended him to the notice of the preſent Archbiſhop of York, who having deſigned to place a buſt of his preſent Majeſty in the Hall of Chriſt Church College, Oxford, preſented

Mr.

Mr. B. to the King, who was pleaſed to ſet to him for that purpoſe.

Mr. J— an old acquaintance of Mr. B. heard Mr. Weſt, the preſent preſident of the Royal Academy, ſay, when he ſaw the model of Mars (Mr. B.'s firſt Statue), "If this is his firſt eſſay, what will this "man attain to when he arrives at matu- "rity?" The ſame friend alſo remembers, that when Mr. B. was modelling the buſt of His Majeſty, the King aſked him "if he had ever been out of the kingdom?" Upon being anſwered in the negative, his Majeſty ſaid, "I am glad of it—you "will be the greater honour to it."

Mr. B.'s execution of this work, added to the fame he had already acquired, procured him the Royal Patronage, and he received an order from His Majeſty to prepare another buſt, intended as a preſent to the Univerſity of Göttingen. Her Majeſty was alſo pleaſed to give directions for a third; and Mr. B. has ſince executed a fourth, which was placed in the

the meeting-room of the Society of Antiquaries. He was ſoon afterwards employed by the Dean and Fellows of Chriſt-Church in forming ſeveral buſts for them, particularly thoſe of the late General Guiſe, the Biſhop of Durham, and the Primate of Ireland.

In 1773 he preſented to the Society for the encouragement of Arts, two Statues in plaiſter, which, by a vote of that Society, were directed to be placed in their great room. On this occaſion Mr. B. addreſſed a letter to them in the following terms:

" The honour you have done me, in " your acceptance of my Statue of Mars " and Venus, affords me an opportunity " which I gladly embrace, of acknowledg- " ing the many obligations I have to the " Society. It was your approbation " which ſtimulated, and your encourage- " ments which enabled me, to purſue " thoſe ſtudies which a diſadvantageous " ſituation had otherwiſe made difficult,

" if

"if not impoſſible. Believe me, Gentle-
"men, I never think of the Society with-
"out gratitude, and without the higheſt
"idea of the principles on which it is
"formed; and which juſtly place it
"among the inſtitutions that do honour
"to human nature,—raiſe the glory of
"a nation,—and promote the general
"good of mankind."——To this letter the Society ſent a polite anſwer, accompanied with their gold medal, on the reverſe of which is inſcribed, EMINENT MERIT.

His firſt *work* in Sculpture is in Chriſt-Church College already mentioned; the firſt *Figures* he executed in marble, are at the Duke of Richmond's at Godwood; his firſt *Monument* is that of Mrs. Withers in St. Mary's, Worceſter.

In the year 1777 he was employed to prepare a model of a monument to be erected in Guy's Hoſpital, Southwark, to the memory of the Founder. It was this work that chiefly recommended him to the

the execution of Lord Chatham's Monument in Guildhall. This latter gave ſuch general ſatisfaction, that he was preſented with a handſome gratuity after the ſum agreed for was paid.

The next year, in which he became a Royal Academician, he finiſhed the monument of Mrs. Draper. About the ſame time he began a marble Statue of Mars from the model he had before exhibited; the commiſſion was given him by Charles Anderſon Pelham, now Lord Yarborough; but it was not compleated till the year 1786. Some time in this year (1780) he executed the two groups for the top of Somerſet houſe, and alſo the Monument of Lord Hallifax, placed in the north aiſle of Weſtminſter Abbey.

In the year 1781, he began the Statue of Judge Blackſtone for All Souls College, Oxford; and the next year that of Henry the Sixth for the Anti-Chapel at Eton.

There

There was ſomething ſo ſingular in the manner in which he received the order for this Statue, that I hope to be excuſed if I mention the detail. A Gentleman called upon Mr. B. who appeared like a diſtreſſed Clergyman applying for relief. The great reſpect which he had for perſons of that deſcription, and the ſatisfaction he felt in relieving them, induced him, with his uſual complacency, to aſk this ſtranger to enter and be ſeated. —He had not continued long before he began to aſk, "Pray Mr. B. have you "been at Rome?"—Mr. B. anſwered in the negative. "I ſuppoſe you have been "at Wilton, to ſee the antiques there?"—No.—After two or three more ſuch queſtions and anſwers, he ſaid with his patience almoſt exhauſted, "Have you "ever been at Weſtminſter Abbey?" On Mr. B.'s replying yes; the Stranger ſaid, "I may, however, as well walk to your "rooms, and look at your works." He examined them attentively, ſaying as he paſſed,

paſſed, "Well—very well—excellent—"and all this produced without going "abroad!—But I can tell you one thing, "and that is, you have no *need* to go." He then gave an order for a buſt of Henry the Sixth for Eton College, and paid down half the price.

After this was executed, he wrote a polite letter of approbation, ſaying he had but one fault to find with the performance, which was, that it was not carried down to the feet, (or a whole length). Soon after he called again on Mr. B. and informed him that he had left a ſum of money in his will for a ſtatue of the above-mentioned King to be placed in the Chapel of Eton College; "But," ſaid he, "upon ſecond thoughts, "it ſeems I had better have it done while "I live; and you ſhould ſet about it im-"mediately, but that I know your cuſtom "is to have half the ſum paid down at "giving the order; now this is not quite "convenient to me at preſent; but I think "I could

"I could let you have 100l."—"Pray, "Sir," ſaid Mr. B. "don't let that be a "conſideration—you have always ſhewn "yourſelf a man of honour—I ſhall leave "every thing to your convenience, and "make the deſign directly."—"I think," ſaid the Gentleman, after a pauſe, "I "can let you have 200l.;" after thus demurring, he paid down the whole cuſtomary depoſit before he left the houſe.

In the year 1783 the inhabitants of Jerſey, having determined to perpetuate the memory of the gallant Major Pierſon, who fell in the defence of that Iſland againſt the French, the execution of the Monument was committed to Mr. B.

It may here be remarked, that in the different competitions with rival artiſts, Mr. B. has been almoſt always ſucceſsful; there being but *one* exception out of ſixteen inſtances.

Of the works which Mr. B. exhibited at the Royal Academy, the following may be enumerated: Statues of Mars and

and Venus;—a coloſſal buſt of Jupiter;—a coloſſal Statue of the Thames;—ſeveral ſmall figures in marble; and a monument ſince placed in the Cathedral of Briſtol, to the memory of Mrs. Draper, celebrated by Sterne under the name of Eliza.

When Mr. B. exhibited his Statue of the Thames juſt mentioned, it was noticed by a certain great Perſonage, who after having expreſſed her admiration of it as a work of Art, enquired "why he "could not avoid making it ſo frightful "a figure?" He replied, "*Art* could not "always effect that which was ſtill within "the reach of nature—*the union of* "*beauty and majeſty.*"

But the moſt important work hitherto preſented to the publick by Mr. B. is the Monument of the Earl of Chatham, erected in Weſtminſter Abbey. This was begun in the year 1778, and finiſhed in 1783. It may perhaps be produced as an inſtance, not only that

true

true genius is the growth of the Britiſh Iſle, but that it may be fully ripened in it, unaſſiſted by foreign aid.

When young, Mr. B.'s abilities as an Artiſt were not called in queſtion, except with reſpect to the Antique; of which ſome affirmed that he underſtood nothing. On this occaſion he modelled his large head of Jupiter Tonans, which was inſpected by ſeveral eminent connoiſſeurs, and miſtaken for a fine antique: they even enquired "from what temple abroad it had been brought?"

Of his different works, it is not the deſign of theſe Memoirs to preſent a regular liſt, and much leſs to enter into a critical inveſtigation of their reſpective merits*. They are before the public, who hitherto have marked them with a diſtinguiſhed approbation: and they will

* I have inſerted ſome obſervations of this kind from a recent publication in the note (C) at the concluſion.

be accompanied through future ages with the applauſe of a Poet*, the productions of whoſe genius will probably be admired till that period at which it will be ſaid "Time ſhall be no longer."

I was, however, ſurpriſed at being aſſured by Mr. John Bacon, jun. that his father never uſed to *ſet his draperies*, as it is termed, at leaſt ſince the Son could remember; but that they were the production of his own feelings, and of the obſervations he had made, with ſcarcely any aſſiſtance from artificial arrangements and diſpoſitions of them upon a figure.

Beſides the works already mentioned, thoſe which ſtand among the principal are, The Bronze Group, in the ſquare of

* ——————— Bacon there
Gives more than female beauty to a ſtone,
And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.
Nor does the chiſel occupy alone
The pow'rs of Sculpture, but the ſtyle as much.
COWPER.

Somerſet-

Somerſet-houſe—Lady Miller's, at Bath —Lord Rodney's, at Jamaica—Lord Heathfield's, at Buckland, near Plymouth—Earl and Counteſs of Effingham's, at Jamaica—Sir George Pocock's and Biſhop Thomas's, in Weſtminſter Abbey—Mr. Howard's and Dr. Johnſon's, in St. Paul's Cathedral—and the Pediment of the Eaſt India houſe.

Mr. B. had under his hand at the time of his death the following Monuments: that of Mr. Whitbread;—Sir William Jones;—the Poet Maſon;—Rev. Joſeph Milner;—General Dundas, for St. Paul's; —Captains Harvey and Hutt, for Weſtminſter Abbey;—a Group for India, containing a coloſſal Statue of Marquis Cornwallis;—an equeſtrian Bronze of William the Third, for St. James's Square; —with ſome others of leſs importance.

This diſtinguiſhed Artiſt, and excellent Man, was ſuddenly attacked with an inflammation in his bowels, on the evening of Sunday, Auguſt 4th, 1799,

which occaſioned his death in little more than two days. During this ſhort illneſs, he expreſſed a firm reliance on that Sure Foundation on which he had long and conſiſtently built. He departed on Wedneſday morning, Auguſt the 7th, in the 59th year of his age; leaving two ſons and three daughters by his firſt wife, and three ſons by his laſt, the ſurviving widow.

Thus departed a man, who though one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed Artiſts of his day, had a mind capable of eſteeming this rank but a ſmall attainment. He graſped at the higher honours and unfading rewards which he now enjoys. Amidſt the infirmities and temptations to which our common nature is ſubject, and under which an enlightened eye and a ſincere heart led him often bitterly to complain, he was decided in the grand point, and determinately purſued it. He deſired to bear his teſtimony to it after his death; and therefore ordered, by his will,

will, a plain ſtone, with the following inſcription (after the name and date) to be placed over his grave*.

WHAT I WAS AS AN ARTIST,
SEEMED TO ME OF SOME IMPORTANCE
WHILE I LIVED:
BUT
WHAT I REALLY WAS AS A BELIEVER
IN CHRIST JESUS,
IS THE ONLY THING OF IMPORTANCE
TO ME NOW.

Mr. B. was about five feet eight inches in ſtature, of a fair complexion, and in-

* A ſimilar tablet is now preparing for Weſtminſter Abbey.

tereſting

tereſting countenance, expreſſive of his natural vivacity, tenderneſs, and addreſs.

Though in paſſing through this ſhort narrative, I could not avoid giving ſome general intimations of the character and ſentiments of Mr. B. I ſhall begin a more particular account of them here, by remarking, that in communicating his ideas, Mr. B. was ſometimes forcible and happy; eſpecially if the occaſion and the aſſembly demanded care and preparation. I am informed, from the beſt authority, that the obſervations he uſed to make at the Royal Academy were received with the greateſt attention and deference.

In familiar diſcourſe, eſpecially when he indulged the metaphyſical turn of his mind, he was frequently circuitous and obſcure: what was ſucceſsful, burſt, like lightning from a cloud; but, unlike that meteor, it remained to enlighten and to warm. He had a habit of illuſtrating his conceptions by emblems and analogies, though he did not much regard the

the accuracy of them; the fertility of his mind for theſe was peculiar. In attempting to convey a full view of any topic, he would ſometimes amplify and wire-draw to tedioufneſs; but the hearer was often well paid at length for his attention by ſome forcible alluſion or compariſon, without which he ſeldom ſpoke long together. The Reader will perceive this in the paſſages which, as a ſpecimen of his uſual ſtyle and manner of ſpeaking, I have put down in theſe memoirs. So quick, indeed, and lively were his feelings and ſympathies, that they were frequently accompanied with his tears.

His talent for illuſtration, together with his affectionate diſpoſition, made him particularly the friend and favourite of children. He had an equal ability for inſtructing, and for entertaining them.—Taking ſome ſtory from the Bible with which the child was acquainted, and putting it into a tranſpoſed form, he uſed to expreſs it in ſo ſimple, novel, and lively a manner,

a manner, that the child ſuppoſed he was hearing a ſtory intirely new, till he afterwards diſcovered with ſurpriſe that the hero of the ſtory was Joſeph, David, &c.

He was naturally irritable, but not at all vindictive; warm in his attachments, but more diſpoſed to lament his wrongs, than to reſent them. I do not recollect any one in which I have obſerved ſo much natural irritability tempered with ſuch meekneſs and forbearance. I remember to have ſeen his temper greatly tried in two inſtances; the firſt of theſe was a moſt unprovoked inſult; the exemplary patience with which it was received, was remarked with admiration by ſeveral perſons preſent: the latter inſtance produced only a ſilent grief, being a wound in the houſe of a friend.

There is another inſtance told in the family, which, however ridiculous, may ſerve to mark and contraſt two characters. While Mr. B. was walking one day

day in Weſtminſter Abbey, he obſerved a perſon ſtanding before his principal work, who ſeemed to pride himſelf on his taſte and ſkill in the Arts, and who was exuberant in his remarks.—"This "Monument of Chatham," ſaid he to Mr. B. (whom it is evident he miſtook for an ignorant ſtranger), "is admira- "ble upon the whole, but it has great "defects."—"I ſhould be greatly oblig- "ed," ſaid Mr. B. "if you would be ſo "kind as to point them out to me."— "Why here," ſaid the Critic, "and there "—do you not ſee?—bad—very bad," at the ſame time employing his ſtick upon the lower figures with a violence that was likely to injure the work.— "But," ſaid Mr. B. "I ſhould be glad "to be acquainted *why* the parts you "touched are bad?" He found, however, nothing determinate in the reply, but the ſame vague aſſertions repeated, and accompanied with the ſame violence. "I told Bacon," ſaid he, "repeatedly

"of

" of this, while the Monument was form-
" ing.—I pointed out other defects, but
" I could not convince him."—" What
" then, you are perſonally acquainted
" with Bacon?" ſaid Mr. B. " O yes,"
replied the ſtranger, " I have been inti-
" mate with him for many years."—" It
" is well for you then," ſaid Mr. B. tak-
ing leave of him, " that your friend Ba-
" con is not now at your elbow, for he
" would not have been well pleaſed at ſee-
" ing his work ſo roughly handled."

It is the reward of ſound character, that however it may be obſcured by calumny or accident, time will bring forth its reality, and oblige even enemies to acknowledge it. This was verified in the probity of Mr. B. Thoſe who a long time felt it their intereſt to ſink his riſing reputation, have afterwards been glad to appeal to his tried integrity.

The following anecdote I received from Mr. B.'s family, authenticated by part of a correſpondence now before me.

Not

Not long after the erection of the Monument of the Earl of Chatham, a rival Sculptor (whoſe name I deſire to omit) requeſted Mr. B. with other Sculptors to value ſome work which that Artiſt had executed, as the price demanded had been objected to by his employer. Mr. B. gave an eſtimate of the value, which much diſappointed the expectations of the Sculptor; he took ſuch offence at this, as led him to bring the ſubject into the news-papers, accuſing Mr. B. of the higheſt injuſtice, and that with the moſt opprobrious epithets. Nor did this Artiſt ſtop at repreſenting Mr. B. as a very bad man, but endeavoured alſo to depreciate ſeveral of his public works. Yet ſtrange to tell, this very man, on a future ſimilar occaſion, applied again to Mr. B., begging his pardon for all that had paſſed, and confeſſing that he conſidered Mr. B. as a perſon upon whoſe juſtice, integrity, and candour, he could rely with the moſt implicit confidence.

Perſons

Perſons who were utterly averſe from Mr. B.'s views as a chriſtian, yet placed unlimited confidence in him as an honeſt man. Mr. Ryley was an ingenious draftſman who uſed to work principally for Engravers, as may be ſeen by his name at the bottom of many modern plates. He alſo executed finiſhed drawings of Monuments for Mr. B.; but though a profeſſed Deiſt, and of courſe one who held in contempt the religious views of Mr. B., yet on hearing Mr. B. accidentally ſay that he was preſſed for a ſum of money, he ſtept out, and, preſently returning, brought Mr. B. a bag containing about 200 guineas, which he would fain have left for Mr. B.'s uſe. Mr. B. blamed him for keeping ſo much caſh in his houſe, and after having obſerved him to appear anxious and melancholy, ſpoke to him about arranging his affairs; particularly, knowing he had conſiderable property, Mr. B. urged him to make his will. Mr. R. replied he did not

not know how.—Mr. B. propoſed making one for him, which he accepted. On this, Mr. R. after naming a few legacies to relations, appointed Mr. B. his executor and reſiduary legatee. Mr. B. however, poſitively refuſed this, inſiſting upon it, that his property ſhould go entirely to his relations; but, at any rate, that nothing ſhould come to himſelf. The event of Mr. R.'s death proved that the property, thus honourably refuſed, was very conſiderable.

I had many opportunities of obſerving Mr. B.'s integrity and generoſity in giving the merits of rival Sculptors their juſt demands. He was ſanguine in praiſing any thing felicitous that came from their hands, and ſeemed to take peculiar pleaſure in expreſſing it. On the contrary, I do not recollect a ſingle inſtance of his being ſevere on the defects that might have afforded ample ſcope for his criticiſm or wit.

I re-

I remember, in walking with him round Weſtminſter Abbey, that he ſeemed delighted in pointing out to me ſuch excellencies in the works of different Artiſts as are not commonly noticed. Among ſuch as are, he warmly joined the public opinion in admiring the exquiſite expreſſion of Mrs. Nightingale's ſinking in death; and the pathos and dignity of the figure of Eloquence in the Duke of Argyle's Monument. The latter, by its attitude, ſeemed to bid future artiſts ſtand at a diſtance, and he ſeemed to think this would be obeyed. I ventured to hint that his figure of Lord Chatham was a copy of it. He ſaid he was quite unconſcious of it when he modelled that Statue, but would not affirm that a figure, which he had ſo long admired, might not have given riſe to his idea.

He often remarked on the affectation of many with reſpect to the antique, who are without taſte for ſelecting what is really excellent in it: "Call it," ſaid he, "but

"but an antique, and people begin im-
"mediately to find ſome beauty. Look
"at that figure in the corner of my ſtudy
"—can you ſee any thing in it?—Yet
"many who come here, and, at firſt,
"take no notice of it, as ſoon as they
"hear it is a caſt from the antique, they
"begin to admire!—Had I made it a
"few years ago, it would not have pro-
"duced me a ſhilling."

He frequently diſcovered a very mo-deſt opinion of his own abilities; I have heard him repeatedly ſay, "I cannot "graſp, much leſs *arrange*, at one time "ſeveral ideas.—If I have any thing "diſtinguiſhing, it is a knack at expreſ-"ſing an idea ſingle, and detached. I "ſtick to my miſtreſs NATURE, and "ſhe often lends me her hand."—"He "knew," obſerves Mr. Bacon, jun. "where his fort lay; I have heard him "often compare himſelf to the cat in "the fable, that had but one ſure trick "by which to ſave herſelf.—He uſed

"con-

" continually to inculcate the importance " of a man's attending to that one point " in which he diſcovered his chief talent " to lie; and produced himſelf as an in- " ſtance of the ſucceſs attending this " principle."

His favourite topic was, the Character of Man, and he often diſcourſed upon that utter dependance, yet intolerable pride, which is ſo obſervable in human nature. " We are all beggars at beſt," " ſaid he, " but are ready to forget it, " and that is one ſource of our pride. " Two beggars ſtand at a door, the one " receives a penny, the other a guinea, it " is well if the latter does not begin to " imagine ſome reaſon for the diſtinc- " tion: it is well if he does not ſwell " upon it, and turn in contempt upon " his fellow. Yet this is but a picture " of a man's admiration of his gifts." This view of the matter led him to be ever ſuſpicious of himſelf, and glad of any hint from his friends.

The

The Reader has, perhaps, obſerved in ſome eminent character, that his credit and uſefulneſs have been greatly leſſened by a peculiar bad habit or falſe ſentiment which either length of time, or the flattery of fond admirers, or a temper indiſpoſed to animadverſion, has at length rendered almoſt inveterate. The real friends of ſuch a character have therefore deſpaired of bringing him the common report; or, if ſuch a friendly reſolution to ſerve him has been determined upon, they have been at a loſs (like the mice of Æſop propoſing a bell for the cat's neck) who ſhould venture to make the deſperate experiment.—Nothing of this ſort of difficulty, I can fully aver, ever diſcouraged remark on the character before us: he ſeemed to feel the reproof of a friend as a token of peculiar friendſhip. Mr. J—an old and very intimate acquaintance of Mr. B. ſays, that "his deceaſed "friend was remarkably grateful when "told of his faults or deficiencies—that,

"he laid a particular injunction upon "Mr. J— to mark his conduct and be- "haviour in buſineſs or company—that, "Mr. J— ſometimes complied with this "requeſt in as ſevere a manner as poſ- "ſible—that, he always met with expreſ- "ſions of gratitude for his ſtrictures, "and could perceive that Mr. B. ſeldom "received his obſervations in vain."

He was, indeed, ſo exquiſitely ſenſible in point of ſelf ſuſpicion, that it not only occurred on ſubjects where he naturally bowed to the ſuperior knowledge and judgment of a friend, but on thoſe where he had himſelf a decided ſuperiority. Once walking through his pieces, as I paſſed a Statue nearly finiſhed, I haſtily ſaid, "Mr. B. that leg is too ſhort." He replied, "Stop, ſtop,—look again, for "it never occurred to me."—"Phoh!" ſaid I, "I know nothing of the matter: "no doubt but you are quite right."— "I don't know that," anſwered he; "I "have taken no other rule of proportion "than

" than the meaſure of my eye, and the re-
" mark of a *freſh* eye is always matter of
" ſerious conſideration with me."—I could give other inſtances of a weightier kind, which I avoid on account of being myſelf ſo perſonally concerned in them, and wiſh here to confeſs the pain I feel in being obliged to ſpeak ſo frequently in the firſt perſon.

Mr. B.'s habits were frugal, but not penurious; this ſtatement I feel warranted to aſſert, though ſenſible it has been, and probably will be, denied. Being favoured by the public with the execution of moſt of the principal pieces which have been done of late, he could not but acquire conſiderable property: but the prudence which, as the father of a large family, and in a precarious profeſſion, he deemed it neceſſary to obſerve —the plain and careleſs ſtyle of every thing about his houſe—the envy of ſome intereſted cotemporaries—and, above all, the motives of his conduct being greatly

miſunderſtood, gave occaſion to the objections which have been brought againſt his liberality.

Far be it from the writer to attempt extenuating a vice ſo odious as covetouſneſs. If it really exiſted in his friend, or ſhould it be found in his own boſom, he truſts he would appear among the firſt to expoſe and condemn it. But, after the ſtricteſt inveſtigation, I am convinced that Mr. B.'s memory has ſuffered injuſtice in this reſpect; and therefore I feel it a duty to regard the old admonition,

——— Abſentem qui rodit amicum,
Qui non defendit, alio culpante—
Hic niger eſt.

That there was ſometimes the appearance of parſimony cannot be denied; and alſo, that he has been known to lament a diſpoſition towards it while he dilated, as he frequently did, on the odiouſneſs

odiouſneſs of the vice. " He has," ſays Mr. B. jun. " been thought hard and " irritable when little miſtakes have been " made; but if he was at any time *lit-* " *tle*, it was in *little things*; for in great- " er affairs he always manifeſted a noble " character of mind. In the year 1793, " when public ſuſpicion brought ruin " upon many of the country Banks, and " ſhook, to their foundation, ſeveral ſub- " ſtantial ones in town, Mr. B. ventured " the greateſt part of his property in the " ſupport of one of them; refuſing to " take ſuch a kind of ſecurity as he " knew would put his friend to an ex- " traordinary expence. He would give " a conſiderable ſum of money to ſome " pious or charitable deſign on that very " day in which he would burn his fingers " by ſparing paper in lighting a candle." It is alſo well known to ſome of his friends that, he poſitively refuſed to execute Monuments, whenever he judged that

that the deſign or the inſcription would have an unchriſtian tendency.

As I write from conviction, and think it my duty to endeavour to remove what may have been injurioufly imputed; ſo, on the other hand, I am ready to concede that, Mr. B. did not poſſeſs that ſplendour of bounty proportioned to his means, by which ſome religious characters have diſtinguiſhed themſelves, and put a dignity upon their profeſſion. But a man may have general benevolence, and even largeneſs of heart, who ſtill is not a THORNTON.

Add to this, Mr. B.'s original circumſtances had begotten cloſe habits; they had become even natural to him; and he had from ſentiment, and upon principle, a diſapprobation of the expenſive ones of the preſent day. His manner of living was that of the laſt age; and he thought ſuch an example beſt for a large family among whom his property was

was to be divided. I, however, mention on the beſt authority, that as he obſerved his own infirmities, and thoſe of the tender part of his family increaſe, he had determined ſoon to enlarge his expences for eaſe and retirement, as far, perhaps, as chriſtian prudence, and its charitable requirements, would admit.

I juſt ſaid "he *had* determined," and ſo probably have many who will read theſe Memoirs, and who, like him, have proceeded to opulence by induſtry: but let them, before it is too late, learn at leaſt from facts which preſs upon them daily, that the *preſent* moment only belongs to man.—*Now*, if ever, he can rationally propoſe to be wiſe; for

"Where is to-morrow? In another World."

While, therefore, Mr. B. employed every method to preſerve his family from mixing with a diſſipated and dangerous world, he ſtrove by every means to render

der their home delightful, and ſpared no expence that could make it ſo. He was in his family not only the pious Father, but alſo the pleaſant friend and companion. While he inſtructed, he entertained; while he reſtrained, he ſoothed. In a word, thoſe knew him not who did not know that he was a truly affectionate Huſband, a tender Parent, a ſteady Friend, a loyal Subject, an honeſt Man, and a real Chriſtian.

I have been able to collect nothing farther concerning him as a Man and as an Artiſt, but the character of a real Chriſtian laſt-mentioned, being as rare as it is ſuperior; and as the Author knew him well in this reſpect, he feels himſelf bound to ſpeak more largely on this part of his ſubject.

It does not appear at what time, or by what means, Mr. B. received his firſt ſerious impreſſions. It is ſaid that he deſcended from religious anceſtors. His Father was remarkable (even at that day)

day) for his piety: he ſeldom ſat down to a meal without opening his Bible. But though the ſon does not ſeem early to have trod in his father's ſteps, it is more than probable the father's inſtructions and example had made a lodgement in the mind of the ſon.—Children of a real Chriſtian receive more conviction than they generally expreſs. I ſpeak from the experience of my own childhood. There is ſomething forcibly impreſſive in the courſe of a godly man; it ſilently, and at times irreſiſtibly, attacks the heart, when no direct addreſs is made to the ear.

But though I can learn nothing of the hiſtory of his mind as to its religious commencement or earlier progreſs, certain it is, that, for many years before his death, Mr. B. was a bright example to his family and to the world. Whatever defects incident to man might ſometime be obſerved, *this* man's character was unequivocal. His virtues were *real;* they grew

grew from a root, and that root was Chriſtianity. In this, he was decided. Religion, with him, was not the Sunday coat of a formaliſt; much leſs was it the vile cloak of a hypocrite. It was neither a ſyſtem of mere opinions, nor the cant of a party; but a change of heart, and a hope full of immortality, grounded alone on the *work of a Redeemer*. Occupied with buſineſs, exalted by favour, and tempted with wealth, Religion ſtill was his grand concern. Animated by this, his family dwelt in a houſe of daily prayer and ſpiritual inſtruction. He even uſed to viſit his workmen when ſick, and diſcourſe with them on the important ſubject that lay neareſt his heart: in ſome inſtances, where he deemed it proper, he prayed with and for them at their bed-ſide.

For though he plainly foreſaw that vital godlineſs muſt meet thoſe Stigmas with which the thoughtleſs or the formal agree to brand every man who dares to differ

differ from themſelves; and though he knew that one riſing into publicity muſt eſpecially lay his account for them,—(a conſideration, however, which has made ſome to ſhrink, and even tremble, who might have been ſuppoſed quite ſuperior to the ignorance and malevolence of ſuch attacks), yet feeling the alternative before him extreme, and the object infinite, he determined to yield up no eſſential truth, nor make any temporiſing conceſſion in order to humour the blind, or flatter the proud. As the reader may wiſh to enquire what truths he deemed ſo eſſential, take a ſpecimen of the manner as well as the matter of them.

" I find I can know but little of even " the world before me; nor can I inde- " pendently take a ſingle ſtep in it ſafely; " what then can I do with reſpect to the " *next* world without my bible? I find " myſelf, indeed, in the midſt of a ſyſtem " of deep moral diſorder, and perpetual " viciſſitude:—If I liſten to the Philo-

" ſophers,

"ſophers, I hear them obtruding ten
"thouſand opinions which only tend to
"prove each other a fool. Beſides which,
"none of them offers any thing that
"*meets*, and much leſs that *relieves* my
"caſe. One cheering light only ſhines
"into this our moral darkneſs. It ſhews
"me the holy law I ought to obey, and
"declares my true character as a trans-
"greſſor from the womb. I feel that
"very depravity and weakneſs in my
"nature which it deſcribes. I have erred
"and ſtrayed like a loſt ſheep, and feel
"no health in me. In ſuch a ſtate, dare
"I venture my ſoul upon conjectures
"and probabilities? Once, indeed, I was
"*driven* to "lay hold on the only hope
"ſet before me" in the Goſpel, from im-
"perious neceſſity; but ſince, I feel
"*drawn* to embrace it for its excellence.
"If infinite wiſdom, holineſs, power, and
"love, unite in appointing my ranſom
"only through a Saviour on his croſs,
"God forbid that I ſhould glory ſave in
"that

"that alone. There I ſee the perfections
"of God harmoniſed—his law magnified
"—the evil of ſin expoſed. I ſee the
"worth of the ſoul—the vanity of the
"world—and the grace and grandeur
"of the goſpel. With a diſpenſation
"ſo ſuited to my condition, can I heſi-
"tate? I tremble at the thought of
"being found negligent under a conſti-
"tution in which God the Father is wil-
"ling to become my father; God the
"Son my redeemer; God the Spirit my
"guide, ſanctifier, and comforter. Be-
"ſides which, in this high and warrant-
"ed friendſhip I find not only *motive*
"but *ſtrength* for proceeding ſoberly,
"righteouſly, and godlily in this preſent
"world, and confidence to aſſuredly
"wait for a better.—I have, as well as
"others, looked around me for ſome other
"ſtanding, but find I can abide poſſible
"conſequences upon no lower ground.
"I will, therefore, neither be frowned
"nor flattered out of a privilege of

"which

"which I am ſo diſtinctly conſcious. "A man may as well tell me I never "received nouriſhment from bread, nor "light nor warmth from the Sun! Ve- "rily it is Chriſtianity or nothing, or "worſe than nothing *."

Mr. B.'s ſabbaths were conſecrated to God. On thoſe days, if any particularly *inſiſted* upon ſeeing him, they were admitted; but commonly they went away, whatever their rank in life, in a ſhort time; finding the only buſineſs they could tranſact with him then was to obtain part of a ſermon. This, however, he managed with ſuch addreſs, that his friends generally left him in perfect good humour. For though he often expreſſed his high diſapprobation of ſome religious characters who miſtake their diſguſting rudeneſs for godly zeal, and their ſavageneſs of manner for faithful dealing, he

* More of his ſentiments of this kind may be ſeen in the Letters placed at the concluſion.

was

was firm and inflexible in the defence of the truth upon every proper occaſion. Two or three authentic anecdotes will help me to convey a more exact idea of his ſentiments and conduct on ſuch occaſions.

A Baronet, who is ſtill living, and who was examining his works, perceived among them a buſt of the late Rev. Mr. Whitfield. "Mr. B." ſaid he, "after "all that has been ſaid, this was a truly "great man—he was the founder of a "new religion."—"*A new* religion, Sir?" replied Mr. B.—"Yes," ſaid the Baronet, "What do you call it?"—"Nothing," replied Mr. B. "but the *old* religion re-"vived with *new* energy, and treated as "if the preacher really *meant* what he "ſaid."

While Mr. B. was remarkably pleaſant in ſociety, he was often mortified at meeting the inſipid and trifling turn which converſation generally takes, even in what is called the beſt company.—

This,

This, indeed, is a general confeſſion, yet few have courage or ability ſufficient to ſtem the ſhallow, babbling torrent in its unmeaning courſe. Mr. B., however, generally kept upon the watch for an opportunity at which ſome rational, if not religious, ſubject, might be introduced. Upon ſuch an occaſion, he made (but quite opportunely) a religious remark to a Lady who ſat next him. "As to that, Mr. B." ſaid ſhe, "my "religion is to fear God and keep his "commandments; ſo we will talk no "more of ſuch matters."—"But, Ma- "dam," replied Mr. B. "you will re- "collect that it is ſaid, "They that *fear-* "*ed* the Lord *ſpake often* one to ano- "ther."

At the time he was putting up the Monument of Lord Chatham, a miniſter, to whom Mr. B. was an utter ſtranger, was walking through the Abbey, and coming unſeen, tapped Mr. B. on the ſhoulder, ſaying, "Take care what "you

" you are about—you work for eternity," (alluding to the ſtory of Zeuxis.) It happened the next morning, that Mr. B. heard this gentleman deliver a diſcourſe from the pulpit, and watching him in his paſſage to the veſtry, he came behind him, and tapping him in a ſimilar manner, ſaid, " Take care what *you* are " about—you work for eternity."

But Mr. B. was a Chriſtian upon a larger ſcale than many whoſe piety is too much confined to their own heart, and thoſe of their family and friends. His mind was continually on the wing to counteract the deſperate attempts made, particularly for years paſt, to overturn Church and State, Order and Godlineſs. For though, from violent publications which he had read, he feared that the indiſcrimination and miſrepreſentation of ſome loyaliſts would tend more to bring a good cauſe into diſgrace than the craft or violence of its bittereſt enemies; yet he ſtill abhorred from his heart the

ſpirit of the Jacobins. "Theſe fellows," ſaid he, "are famous at the pick-axe— "They can quickly pull down a Palace, "but cannot build ſo much as a Shed. "—They affect to illuminate the world, "but it is by the light of a conflagration "which diſcovers nothing but the deſo- "lation it ſpreads. Their diſorder is "treated as *new*, but it was always in "human nature, and, under new cir- "cumſtances, this diſeaſe, which for- "merly lay more hid, is now *come out* "*upon the ſkin:* or, like a thief in the "houſe, the villain *filched* before; but "being joined to a band, he ſays, *will* "*ye go with us and rob?*—Wiſe men, "however, may learn much from this "evil: among other things, they may "ſee what ſin is when it is ripe:—it "may be nipt in its growth by a froſt, "but in its ſeaſon, it is rank. It will "in the end ſhew, that however this "Philoſophiſm may ſerve for *talking*, it "is

"is nothing for *doing* — except miſ-
"chief."

Above all, he lamented that perſons making a ſerious profeſſion of religion, ſhould be found attempting even to palliate that ſpirit of inſubordination which had already taken ſuch portentous ſtrides, and ſtill threatens to overturn Europe: or that ſuch perſons ſhould not perceive how utterly the genius of Chriſtianity oppoſes ſuch a reſtleſs ſpirit; and, calling the attention of its children to nobler objects, leaves "the pot-
"ſherds to ſtrive with the potſherds of
"the earth."

His warm attachment to the cauſe of real religion led him alſo to grieve, and ſometimes to burn, at the offences and impoſitions which occaſionally ariſe in connection with the religious world. Infidels inſiſt upon it that we are a motley group of knaves and fools, and the freaks of ſome wild or falſe characters, which are found among us, are brought forward

in proof of it. They chooſe to forget that of the pureſt ſociety which ever appeared upon earth, it could be ſaid, "*Have not I choſen you twelve, and one* "*of you is a Devil?*" It muſt needs be that offences come: and wherever religion ſpreads, impoſtors and fanatics of various ſorts will take advantage, as mountabanks do from the gathering of a crowd.

Mr. B., however, keenly felt ſuch abuſes. He wiſhed a religious profeſſion to be kept ſober, clean, and tranſparent.—"What," ſaid he, ſpeaking of a modern impoſition, "What have "Chriſtians to do with things ſuſpicious "or equivocal?—We have too much to "do with ſubſtantials to dabble in every "*hocus pocus* that knaves are ready "enough to invent, and of which even "good men are ſometimes the dupes! "—Turn aſide, ſays one, and I will ſhew "you a thing!—No:—it is not worth "while—I have ſeen too many punches

"and

"and puppet ſhews already.—Take my "poker, ſays another, it is excellent for "your purpoſe;—yes; but the other end, "perhaps, may be red hot!"

"There," added he, "is that Brothers "with his prophecies! Should one have "thought that any body could have "been found weak enough to attend to "the nonſenſe of ſuch a man?—But the "truth is, it is *any thing* with the World, "and *any thing* with the Devil, but Faith "and Repentance."

Thus, while too many were increaſing the national troubles by ill-timed charges and complaints, Mr. B. felt grateful, and ſometimes expreſſed admiration, that things were found upon the whole ſo well, and that, when, on account of abounding wickedneſs under ſpecial privileges, ſo much heavier a ſcourge might have been expected, it fell ſo comparatively light. He accordingly joined liberally in the public ſubſcription for the uſe of Government at the Bank, and armed

armed his Sons and workmen. He was, indeed, ever ready by his influence and property, to inſtitute and ſupport whatever tended to promote and to ſecure the beſt intereſts of mankind. Hence, the ſtrenuous and ſucceſsful effort he made at the inſtitution of the Sunday Schools to preſerve the Lord's day from ſecular employments, and which he deemed the moſt important thing he ever did.—Hence, his prompt attention to the various applications made to him for aſſiſtance in religious and charitable deſigns—and, hence his employing his leiſure moments in compoſing popular moral and religious pieces, by which the public mind might be corrected or improved.

I well remember his being deeply intereſted in promoting a favourite deſign he had conceived juſt before his death; it was the forming a literary ſociety, whoſe object it ſhould be to oppoſe works of an irreligious and erro-

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neous tendency by a periodical publication.

An extract from a letter which I received from him at that time will beſt deſcribe his zeal in this deſign.

" I feel myſelf incompetent to the " ſcheme my head runs upon, and eſpe- " cially the laſt with which I have been " amuſing my friends. I am ſo compleatly " humbled, that I ſeem to be ready to " teach the Horn-book with the Old " Woman's knitting needle. Mr. —, " who ſees much farther than I can, " ſeems to have dropt it, I conclude, as " impracticable, for I cannot doubt that " his ſpirit is congenial to the deſign. I " ſee I have graſped at too much, but " I am willing to let go my hold to " take up what may be more prac- " ticable.—I am exceedingly low ſpirited " about it; full of the deſign, my ima- " gination painted a ſcene which my " dim ſight almoſt took for real archi- " tecture; but I ſoon recollected how

" vain

" vain every contrivance was without " the divine fanction and bleffing."

As to his literary attainments, it is rather to be admired, conſidering his early diſadvantages and arduous profeſſional occupations, that he arrived at mediocrity in letters, than that he ſhould not attain to excellence. Yet, whoever reads what he wrote under the article SCULPTURE in Dr. Rees's edition of Chambers's Dictionary, will form no mean opinion of his attainment in this reſpect. As few poſſeſs that large work, I have added the ingenious diſquiſition which follows the hiſtory of the Art under the note (B) annexed to theſe Memoirs.

He was alſo the Author of ſeveral anonymous pieces reſpecting the Arts— of ſeveral well written proſe epitaphs, one of which was preferred by the King for Lord Chatham's Monument, and on which his Majeſty complimented him— and, of a poetical tract, calculated, from the

the familiarity of its manner, to correct and allay the political ferment that prevailed a few years ago among the common people. To ſay ſomething popular to this claſs was the principal ambition he ſeemed to have in uſing his pen. He amuſed himſelf in putting down hundreds of epitaphs which he hoped might more uſefully meet the public eye in a church-yard, than thoſe trite and often ridiculous ones that are uſually obſerved. With the ſame view he compoſed a great number of fables, as the ground of the moral and religious ſentiments with which he meant to accompany them. They were, however, written in ſuch haſte,—generally put down at the moment the thought occurred; and often conceived as he walked the ſtreets, that they are not fit, in their preſent ſtate, to appear in print: but as a ſpecimen of each will oblige his friends, they will find it at the end of theſe Memoirs under the note (A.)

A long

A long and intimate acquaintance with the deceaſed enables the Writer of theſe Memoirs to ſpeak thus of a once invaluable friend, the loſs of whoſe counſel and example he muſt deeply feel through life. In his intercourſes, he obſerved the Philoſopher and the Sculptor loſt in the Believer and the Philanthropiſt: he heard the *Artiſt* diſcourſe, but he ſaw the *Chriſtian* glow: and he now views, with heart-felt ſatisfaction, the bleſſings of this eminent character deſcending upon his children.

THE two following Letters, written to Miſs Bacon, I gladly inſert, as they will not only ſerve to confirm the account already given of the ſubject of theſe Memoirs with reſpect to his feelings as a Parent, but alſo more fully exhibit his ſentiments as a real Chriſtian. I make no apology here for any want of accuracy that may be obſerved in them; ſince, to examine a private correſpondence, like this, with criticiſm, would betray an inconſideration which it ſeems vain to attempt correcting.

LETTER I.

MY VERY DEAR CHILD,

I HAVE been ſeeking for a moment of leiſure to acknowledge your very acceptable letter, and now I am reſolved to

to ſeize it. Much I cannot ſay, much I *need* not ſay; the Redeemer is ſoon mentioned, but that Redeemer comprehends all things. I bleſs his name for what he has done for you, and all my future expectations are from *Him*. Though Mr. —, —, &c. are withdrawn, HE who made them what they were, can fill their place with others, or can do without them. I deſire to rejoice on your behalf for the comforts you are favoured with, and, perhaps, I ought to rejoice at your *conflicts* too. Sure I am, you would have leſs evidence of the reality of a divine work, if you were entirely without them. God obtains honour in ſupporting you under them; and you acquire patience, experience, &c. by the exerciſe.

My Dear Child, all mankind have their conflicts: he that is intirely of the world, finds it a world of conflicts, and cannot eſcape many a wound from it: but the worſt of his caſe is, that he has no Phyſician to apply to, "*though the ſor-*

row

row of the world worketh death." What a bleſſed thing it is, to fight for the *Truth*—for the honour of God—for everlaſting Life—to ſtrive for the nobleſt Prize—to wear celeſtial Armour—to have free acceſs to that Tree "whoſe leaves "are for the healing of the nations," and which heal every wound upon the immediate application—to fight with the Captain at our ſide, and to be *ſure* of the victory at laſt.

Certainly we have a foe ſubtil and powerful; but in both theſe reſpects he is a conquered enemy. It is impoſſible for me to deſcribe a thouſandth part of his ſtratagems. One general hint I will ſuggeſt to you; take the Armour of Righteouſneſs on the *right* hand and on the *left*. There is ſcarce a temptation but has an oppoſite one as dangerous. Who can tell which is to be moſt dreaded, preſumption or deſpair? Either for us to think that God will never puniſh Sin, or that he will never pardon the peni-

penitent? If we in any degree gain the victory over ſenſuality, Satan will then tempt us to phariſaiſm or ſpiritual pride—there is no end of theſe oppoſite temptations—if he cannot keep us from the conſcientious performance of duties, he will urge us to a performance beyond our ſtrength, that he may tempt us to deſpair. From the fatal effects of all which contrary ſnares, may the bleſſed Saviour of ſinners, my Dear Girl, deliver you.

This is precarious weather for riding —There is no place, my Dear, but Heaven, where it *always* ſhines.—Well, it is not far off, let us congratulate one another.

Adieu! adieu!

J. BACON.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR CHILD,

Dec. 12, 1792.

I DO indeed moſt heartily concur with you in the ſentiment, that "there is no "ſubject ſo proper for a letter" from one ſinner to another, "as that of *Imma-* "*nuel*, God with us." Every other ſubject depends on the fabrick of our imagination for its importance. Still the votaries of pleaſure ſay, "at leaſt it has a "reality, for we feel an intereſt in it "every hour." We grant it; pleaſure is pleaſure, from whatever ſource it ariſes; and let them make the moſt of the conceſſion. Truth muſt allow that the colours in the riſing bubble are brilliant, and its motion pleaſing; but it has a quality which mocks the joy of its poſ-

ſeſſor.

ſeſſor. I ſhould have ſaid *had* mocked, for it is gone before I finiſh the ſentence: yet ſhort as its exiſtence is, it had a leſſon of immenſe import; while he has been gazing at it, opportunity, which is ever on the wing, has ſeized the critical moment and paſſed by.

I remember to have heard a ſenſible perſon ſay, that "he could never covet "the honour of the City's chief Magiſ- "trate, becauſe that honour continued "only one year." Alas! why had he not riſen to grandeur of character ſufficient to have made him ſay the ſame of ſeventy years! With what a low ambition is man ſatisfied! It is enough if he is not the *greateſt* fool in the company. But why did I ſay ſeventy? When does his felicity laſt ſeven? While the animal ſpirits move briſkly, the viſion may ſubſiſt. "The ſpirit of man "may ſuſtain his infirmity," but a ſmall wound in that ſpirit annihilates all: This

This is the moment (and *many ſuch moments there are*) when nothing can apply to our caſe but the Goſpel.

We ſee the firmeſt Friendſhip and the fondeſt Affection often exerting their utmoſt efforts in vain: but who can communicate to the ſpirit of man but he who made it? He that ſearches the heart alone knows the depth of the malady; and he that probes the wound, alone knows what will cure it. The Balm may be found in Gilead, where the Phyſician alſo is; "the Spirit, the "Water, and the Blood," all bear their record in Heaven.

O how happy am I, my Dear Child, that you have *tried* this cordial ſpecific, and that I am not writing to inform you! I write, not becauſe you know not theſe things, but becauſe you do. This is the wine, the value of which encreaſes with its age; none, having drank it, deſire new, for they ſay the old is better: this, therefore, is only fit for

immortal beings whoſe ſtate admits of no other means of ſatiety.

A fortnight ago, I felt an alarm in my breaſt, ariſing from the ſtate of public affairs, and my mind was ruminating upon various means to ſtem the increaſing tide of popular diſcontent; but ſuddenly I recollected David's moſt powerful reſource. In the calculation of politicians, all hope was over with David; that army was moſt numerous which was with Abſalom, and he had beſides ſtolen the hearts of the people: he had alſo a deep and ſubtle revolutioniſt in his Camp. David had but one ſeemingly poor manœuvre left, (one that I believe is never mentioned in all the books of tactics) "*Lord, turn the coun-*
"*ſel of Ahithophel into fooliſhneſs.*" Was ever ſo ſimple a ſtep? It ſeemed leſs efficient to meet a powerful enemy with, than even the ſling and the ſtone; yet it was the very thing, and the only thing too, that effected David's deliver-

ance.

ance. Such a prayer as this was my beſt confidence, and I have not yet been confounded.

You ſay not a word about returning, and I know it is not eaſy for *ſuch* Friends to part; let even your friendſhip afford a motive for ſecuring a joint inheritance from which you ſhall never be ſeparated, nor from each other, nor from

Your affectionate Father,

J. BACON.

CONSIDERING the prevailing ſcepticiſm of the age, and the various and violent attacks that have been made upon vital godlineſs, as if uncertain in its nature, and debaſing in its tendency; I hope it will not be thought impertinent if, with a view to expoſe theſe miſrepreſentations, I embrace the opportunity which here preſents itſelf, of adding a few general reflections which have occurred to my own mind in contemplating the character of my friend. Both before and ſince his departure, he has been the occaſion of leading me to think on that *Sameneſs of Principle*, and on that *Superiority of Sentiment* which belong to a religion like his.

I. The IDENTITY or ſameneſs of its principle. What, I have ſaid to myſelf, is ſound religious principle?—if it may be diſcovered by its effects, then, bad as the world is, it is ſtill found paſſing among

among us, though too often an unacknowledged ſtranger. Look at Bacon. He is naturally ſanguine; has exquiſite ſenſibility; he is opulent; he can ſuffer no ennui for want of an object; he has fame to fan his vanity; and a fancy ever on the wing to amuſe his taſte. What then is it which, bridling every inordinate propenſity, leads him to find his chief enjoyment in adminiſtering inſtruction to the ignorant, and teaching "the "young idea how to ſhoot"—in converſing with a kindred mind on inviſible things, or retiring for the purſuit or contemplation of them? I obſerve ſuch objects can draw him from ſcenes of ſcience, and grandeur, and pleaſure; I have ſeen him ſteal moments from the Royal Academy, though then expecting his aſſiſtance, to get one more hint for the religious improvement of his head or his heart.

Perhaps he is an enthuſiaſt. Yes; certainly; if by that term is meant one who

who ſtrongly feels his art, but more ſtrongly feels the object of his heavenly purſuit. But if by the term is meant one who is led on by a heated but deluſive imagination, then let us ſtay a little, and enquire reſpecting this.

Do ſuch enthuſiaſts as the latter proceed with humility and fear? Are they rational and conſiſtent in their conduct? Do they explore the ground as they tread, and only advance as they feel it good? Suſpicious of themſelves, do they inceſſantly enquire of the beſt and wiſeſt they know, in order to be directed? Are they glad of a hint? and, however contrary to their feelings or intereſt, do they implicitly bow to the plain precepts of their Maker in his word?—Yet this did Bacon. Let us, if we would be wiſe, learn to diſtinguiſh between the found and rational determination of that man who, having dug the field and found the treaſure, hides it for joy, and parts with every inferior conſideration for

for it; and the man whoſe raptures have nothing but the mere figment of a wild imagination for their foundation.

The fact reſpecting ſuch a ſtrong though rational direction in the mind of man towards heavenly things, however it may raiſe ſuſpicion in thoſe who have not felt it, is unqueſtionable among ſuch as have.—To illuſtrate the ſubject —I ſee a ſmall bar of ſteel in the lid of a box now before me. I ſee it tremble as if undetermined, yet keep a certain direction. I can cauſe it to deviate from its point by impulſe; but though I can diſturb its natural direction, I cannot give it a *new* one: nay, this very diſturbance will ſtill more fully diſcover its inclination; it will put it upon labouring to recover its point; if I ceaſe to agitate, it will ſoon ceaſe to vibrate, and return to its proper reſt. Of this I am clearly conſcious, but I am not more conſcious of this fact, than I am of another, of which the former may

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ſtand as an emblem. Thouſands, as well as myſelf, know that the polar direction of the ſteel is not more a matter of fact in the natural world, than the heavenly direction they feel is a fact in the moral world; and that a diſpoſition often obſerved in men who were once the moſt reprobate, to "live ſoberly, "righteouſly, and godly, in the preſent "world," is the proper effect of this influence.

It is not indeed ſo eaſy, to deſcribe what paſſes in the moral as in the natural world. It would not have been poſſible for Zaccheus to have fully ſet forth the feelings with which he as readily quitted the gold in his coffers as the tree from which he deſcended.—Saul could not make the Phariſees or the Philoſophers comprehend the nature of that full conviction with which he "counted all "things but as droſs for the excellency "of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus his "Lord;" nor the evidence he had

that

that it was his higheſt honour to ſuffer for his maſter's ſake. Nor could my late friend, after having obtained the approbation of his hearers at the Royal Academy by his obſervations upon the arts, have clearly conveyed, with thoſe obſervations, the more intereſting ones which he had made, and the perceptions he had felt, in a ſuperior ſcience.

For religion that is vital and experimental, has not only its common faith, but its correſpondent feelings:—not only its peculiar objects, but its proper taſte; which, like that for the fine arts, we muſt actually poſſeſs, in order to fully comprehend. From which premiſes two conſequences will naturally follow, 1. That a pious man will have ſtronger evidence of the truth and reality of his religion than he can fully demonſtrate to others who are of a contrary character; and 2dly, That he can no more doubt the ſuperiority of his choice and taſte, becauſe ſcorned by incompetent judges,

than

than one who had a taſte for proportion, or an ear for muſic, would doubt their exiſtence from their being denied by ſuch as had none.

By this religious principle, therefore, found in all true believers, they not only reſemble lines drawn from a wide circumference to a common centre, but, under the operation of an Almighty Spirit, a new and ſpecial direction is given to their deſires and faculties towards the attainment of their only, their proper, and their appointed reſt. By a moral ſenſation analogous to the natural, they *feel* the vanity and diſorder of their preſent ſtate—They *ſee* one chief good—They *hear* of one way to it—They *favour* the heavenly propoſal—and after receiving a *taſte* for THAT, they find every other good comparatively inſipid. But is this chief good, or the appointed way to it by a Redeemer, an invention of their own? or a mere tradition of their fathers? On the

the contrary, they have irrefragable evidence that they were incapable of forming ſuch an expectation—that man could not imagine it—but, that it is a "hope ſet before them" by HIM that cannot lie. Now it is this heavenly INFLUENCE they are under, working faith and obedience, that conſtitutes their peculiar character, and identifies true religion whenſoever or whereſoever it is found.

When, therefore, the enemies of ſuch a profeſſion bring forward the ſtale objection—"What is true religion? For "we find it one thing in England, ano-"ther in Scotland, a third at Rome, "and often twenty different things in "the ſame place—Settle this, ſay they, "among yourſelves, before you addreſs "us on the ſubject."—We anſwer, it has long been ſettled. While you ſtumble at the ſuppoſed *diverſity*, we both diſcern and admire the *identity*. We feel the fulleſt conviction that real religion

gion in itſelf, is ſo far from being a different thing in different places, that it is one and the ſame thing at all times, and in all places; and that, in thoſe particulars which are abſolutely *eſſential* to it, it will yield to the impoſitions of no time nor place, or its martyrs had not bled.

In order to underſtand this, men ſhould conſider what real religion is, namely—the heart of fallen man under a divine influence, returning to God through a Mediator.—The Scriptures term this LIFE. As the life of the body is one and the ſame principle in all men, whatever difference be obſerved in their reſpective complexions, habits, and forms; ſo real religion, which is the life of the ſoul, is one and the ſame principle of a higher order, indeed, but which equally identifies the ſubject; and, like the former, it is diſcerned by the exerciſe of its proper faculties and acts—it requires the ſame

almighty

almighty power to maintain as to create it—and is quite distinct from and superior to its accidents, and the circumstances among which it may be found.

For God, who in the first creation "called the light to shine out of darkness," hath in this new creation "shined into our hearts, to give the "light of the knowledge of the glory "of God in the face of Jesus Christ," and thus still continues to perform the most glorious of his miracles, the moral miracle of recovering the heart of an eccentric and exorbitant creature to his Creator.

By this moral change, man is actually recovered to his God, to his neighbour, and to himself. Tell me not of the external forms, and petty circumstantial distinctions with which his education or connections may have prejudiced his mind; they are but as his provincial dialect, his dress, or his complexion. The

grand

grand enquiry ſhould be—Is the ſinner humble and penitent before his God?—Is he ſeeking acceptance only through that Redeemer "whom God hath ſet forth "for a propitiation through faith in his "blood?"—Is he found walking in a courſe of holy obedience? If this be really his caſe, then call ſuch a man by what term of diſtinction or epithet of reproach you pleaſe, ſtill the man is alive to God, and will join his fellow-believers in ſerving HIM, if not in the ſame modes, yet to the ſame ends: in the *matter* of their confeſſions, petitions, and praiſes, they will agree, however in the *form* of preſenting them they may differ; there will be a *unity*, though not a uniformity; and thus the divine life of true religion, derived from a union with the one living head of the church, will be identified by its eſſential properties and effects, in whatever Age or Church on earth it is found.

Strip

Strip real religion, therefore, of that which is no eſſential part of it, or what is only accidental to it, and regard it as deſcribed in the Scriptures, and exemplified, though but imperfectly, in the true believer, and then you will find it the ſame under every diſpenſation. Thus the ſame ſenſe of need—choice of good—hope through a Redeemer—and good will to men, dwelt in the hearts of Abraham and of Bacon. The latter could never more exactly expreſs his feelings than in ſaying

——————" with the Patriarch's joy
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;
I truſt in Thee, and know in whom I truſt;
Or Life or Death, is equal; neither weighs:
All weight in this---O let me live to Thee!"
YOUNG.

I remember my friend's ſaying, after church, on hearing a diſcourſe upon Abraham's departure—" In this ſimpli-
" city of holy *aim* and of implicit *de-*
" *pendance,*

"*pendance,* I think ALL the ſpiritual "children of the father of the faithful are "perfectly united." I may add too that, in this he was not only a ſincere, but enlightened example. If, with the Patriarch, he forſook a corrupt world to go out he knew not whither, yet he knew, like the Patriarch, WHY, and with WHOM he went out.

For any one to tell us, by way of objection, of the various inventions that men have mingled with religion, whether falſe or true, is only telling in how many ways a puppet may be dreſſed, or a living man diſguiſed. To ſuch an objector I would ſay, If you ſtumble at the pitiable notions and practices of the weak and ſuperſtitious, and occupy yourſelf about the *wood, hay, ſtubble,* with which ſuch build upon the foundation—or, if you only liſten where bodily diſorder, accidentally connected with religious impreſſion, utters its wild abſurdities, verily you have

your

your reward. In the firſt inſtance, you have purſued folly, and caught it; in the ſecond, you have watched infirmity, and diſcovered that it will wander: you have looked for truth where you ſhould not, and found in its ſtead what every conſiderate man would have expected to find. But had you looked further, and where only an indiſpoſition to find real religion, (which, in reality, lies at the bottom of theſe objections), refuſes to look, you would have found ſuch characters as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Job, Abraham, &c. in the firſt ages of the world; and, afterwards thoſe who, actuated by the ſame principles, have, until this day, trod in their ſteps; *then*, indeed, we ſhould have the point in queſtion properly before us—ſee the religion which is real and true—know how it feels and acts in different places and circumſtances—and find that it is eſſentially the ſame thing in all.

The

The ſame may be ſaid of the ſophiſtry which has been employed to blind the eyes of the ignorant by inſtances of fraudulence and hypocriſy. In our enquiries upon ſo important a ſubject as religion, it is *ſubſtance*, and not ſhadow, that ſhould be regarded;—the *rule*, and not the exception. It would be well, however, if the ſophiſt could be convinced with what ſincerity he acts in his induſtry to accumulate and advance ſuch inſtances. I would aſſiſt him in trying it, by propoſing this very plain rule. When you receive your gold, and find, as you have probably found before, that a counterfeit or two has slipped in among it; determine immediately to throw away the rest, as of no value—reſolve that no true gold is to be found. But you revolt at this: you love your money, and inſtantly apprehending the diſtinction between true and falſe, you reject the ſpurious coin, and cautiouſly treaſure up the rest. And why

do

do you not act thus reſpecting the gold that periſheth not? Alas! the reaſon is too evident. "Light is come into the "world, but men love darkneſs rather "than light, becauſe their deeds are "evil."

But, while prejudiced minds will be occupied only about accidents and offences in religion; and little minds will magnify the peculiarities of the ſect they have joined, as if an eſſential part of it; and artful men among them, taking advantage of this weakneſs, will imitate thoſe of old, who cried, "Except ye "be circumciſed after the manner of "Moſes, ye cannot be ſaved*:" the Chriſtian of a more enlarged mind and ſpiritual character (an inſtance of which appears in my late friend), he firmly maintaining his hold of evangelical truth, but looking beyond the impoſitions and often frivolous diſtinctions with which it

* Acts xv. 1.

has been incumbered, he will reſolve, with the Apoſtle, that "*neither* cir-"cumciſion availeth any thing, nor un-"circumciſion, but faith that worketh "by love*."

To ſay nothing more of the groſſer ſtumbling blocks which ariſe, it ſeems moſt devoutly to be wiſhed, that inſtead of that motley and diſfiguring exhibition of chriſtianity which its profeſſors have preſented to mankind, one uniform, orderly, and diſtinguiſhing aſpect of it ſhould only appear. Much that is now offenſive and confounding would, doubtleſs, thereby be removed. The hiſtory, however, of eighteen hundred years, ſhews us how little is to be expected of uniformity, though every Chriſtian ſeems bound to uſe his efforts towards maintaining any meaſure of it. He ſhould alſo watch over his own heart, leſt frivolous ſcruples or wrong tempers ſhould increaſe the evil. For ſchiſm has

* Gal. v. 6.

not

not only a deforming and deranging effect wherever it ſprings up, but it has brought ſeveral once flouriſhing churches to ruin. Still, if we cannot have uniformity, let it be remembered that between unity and uniformity there exiſts a broad line of diſtinction, which muſt not be delivered up to the unbeliever. Uniformity in modes may be the moſt becoming *dreſs* of the church, but unity in ſpirit is the *life* of it. It is this unity of ſpirit to the living HEAD, and to one another as his living members, which identifies the character of true believers—which conſtitutes their eſſential diſtinction from the reſt of mankind, and which abides with them for ever.

" I will give them, ſaith God, " one " *heart* and one *way;*" and he hath fulfilled his promiſe. The ſtupid Hindoo—the ferocious American Indian—the degraded African—the cultivated European—the Prince with his ſceptre, or the

the Commander with his truncheon—the Student with his book, or the Artiſt with his chiſel,—though widely diſtinguiſhed by habits and circumſtances, yet when brought to know the diſtinguiſhing truths of the goſpel, and feel its converting power, are found with one common ſympathy to unite in ſpirit with each other, in expreſſing the ſame wants, ſeeking the ſame relief, and joining in the ſame ſong—"Worthy is "the Lamb that was ſlain to receive "power, and riches, and wiſdom, and "ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and "bleſſing."

Let then no ſincere enquirer after the chief good be the dupe of the impoſing ſophiſtry, and much leſs be abaſhed at the rude ſcoffs of thoſe who have taken no higher rule of judgment than what they ſee floating on the ſurface of a groſs and multiform profeſſion of chriſtianity; but let him read his BIBLE to learn the ſubſtance of that grand deſign. There,

There, after contemplating man's original apoſtacy, let him mark that one living and conſecrated way of redemption inſtituted at the fall, kept in memory by typical ſhadows, and finiſhed on Calvary. Let him trace the operation of that Spirit of life, which, giving effect to the deſign, and to that only, produces in man a new and diſtinct character; "For," as the apoſtle expreſſes it, "by one Spirit we are all "baptized into one body, whether we "be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be "bond or free; and have been *all made* "*to drink into one Spirit.*" A character this, quite diſtinct from that of the proud, who deſpiſe it, the careleſs, who diſregard it, the hypocrite who apes it, or the fanatic who expoſes it to contempt.

Placed in the midſt of ſuch various miſrepreſentations, both from avowed

* 1 Cor. xii. 13.

enemies

enemies and pretended friends, we can have no ſecurity but as our eye is fixed on the infallible ſtandard of truth put into our hands. And as from this we learn that but two final ſtates are appointed, and but two general claſſes of mankind paſſing through life towards thoſe ſtates; our reſult ſhould be, as an excellent writer moſt truly, though quaintly expreſſes it, "Let the whole "world be divided into two great "ſects, viz. *Timiſts* and *Eternaliſts* *."

I add a remark which naturally occurs whenever lay-men of eminence are ſeen to come forward as living evidences of the force of truth; namely, that the Almighty ſeems to adopt a method for vindicating his religion, and ſhewing its identity, by raiſing up witneſſes who cannot be ſuſpected from their profeſſions and circumſtances. Such ſerve to ſhew that vital religion is not

* Adams's Works, Vol. I. p. 185.

only

only one holy principle common to them all, but alſo that ſuch a religion is *practicable* in all circumſtances. Avoiding the indelicacy of naming living characters, we may obſerve that he will have ſuch inſtances as ROCHESTER among the Peers—HALE among the Judges——GARDINER among the Colonels—BOYLE among the Philoſophers—BOERHAAVE among the Phyſicians—BACON among the Artiſts, &c. &c.—He will prove, in a word, that it is the *heart* of the irreligious, and not the lawful profeſſion, attended with its peculiar difficulties, which refuſes to bend to his counſel and authority; and that to ſhine forth as lights in the world from one holy flame enkindled in the heart, is to attain the higheſt ſtyle of man, which leads me to ſpeak of,

II. That SUPERIORITY of SENTIMENT which belongs to true religion; and by which is meant, not only the nobler objects it preſents, but that elevation

vation and comprehenſion of mind which it inſpires in its ſound profeſſors, like my Friend. Chriſtians are bound to aſſert this in oppoſition to the debaſed account given by its enemies; and to inſiſt that, however this "light of life" muſt humble them as fallen creatures before God, yet it inſtructs and animates them to riſe above the world in which they live, and become ſuperior to their former ſelves.

This is Order; the man and his concerns take their right place.—It is Elevation; ſuch a one dwells on high.—It is Emancipation; not the pretended one of philoſophy which, like the quack, drives the external ſymptoms of a diſeaſe from the ſkin, and fixes it more deeply in the vitals; and much leſs is it that of the Enthuſiaſt, who dreams of heavenly gifts and ſpecial privileges while he refuſes to ſubmit to the order and ſanction of a heavenly rule of life. The aſcendant ſpirit which Bacon derived

rived from his religion had no affinity with the pride, self-confidence, and affected singularity of these two characters.

Elegant in his manners, and rational in his mind as a man, diligent and superior as an artist, he dared to differ from the world, as far as that world dared to differ from its God. "Choose ye," said he, by his conduct as well as words, "this day whom ye will serve; but as "for me and my house, we will serve "the LORD *."

But in order to estimate the superiority with which true piety elevates a Christian, we must not compare and contrast a christian with men evidently degraded by their vices, but with men in similar situations with his own. Bacon must be placed with men of genius, affluence, and taste; who, surrounded by the choicest productions of the arts

* Joshua xxiv. 15.

they

they moſt admire, are deeply intereſted in them both by their feelings and their fame. We ſhall then ſee, not only to what degree pure religion will lift a man above the meaner, but the more refined gratifications. This compariſon, however, is not advanced to the prejudice of the arts, as ſuch; but rather to ſhew the ſuperiority of religion, and the elevating effect it has on the minds of thoſe who pay it that homage it ſo juſtly demands. Let every excellence have its juſt claim and place, for this is but *order*, and that order too which religion itſelf will ſanction. Let us render to genius the things which belong to genius, and to God the things that are God's, and all will be right.

As an Artiſt, that which Bacon ſet his hand to, he did with all his might;—as a Philoſopher, he ſmiled at his own purſuits and attainments, and at the admiration and expence which attended them;—but, as a Chriſtian, he could not help pitying

pitying thoſe devotees who ſeemed abſorbed in his performances.—Such of his friends as could comprehend and rightly eſtimate his ſentiments, have frequently known him to expreſs this in a variety of ways. He traced the root of this ſad miſtake up to the fall of man, who poſſeſſing, in his alienated ſtate, no more valuable conſideration in hand or in proſpect, ſpends his thoughts and money "for that which is not bread*." Man in his maturity, like man in his infancy, feeling nothing ſubſtantial whereon his heart can reſt, follows his tired fancy from object to object, and in his way calls upon the Artiſt to help him. "Upon what principle then," ſaid I to him, "do you continually la-"bour to meet the taſte of ſuch fickly "wanderers?"—"I conſider," ſaid he, "that profeſſion in which I am provi-"dentially placed, and proſperouſly and

* Iſa. lv. 2.

"honour-

"honourably ſucceeded, to be as law-
"ful as any other that is not concerned
"in furniſhing the neceſſaries of life;
"beſides which, part of it, eſpecially the
"monumental, may be employed to an
"important, moral purpoſe; but the
"truth is, if the work itſelf be innocent,
"the workman I hope is not account-
"able for the abuſe made of it; and as
"the world will have not only its ne-
"ceſſaries, but its *toys*, I may as well
"be the toy-man as any other."

Marking the indifference with which he often diſcourſed of his art, I once mentioned it to him, and at the ſame time told him a ſtory or two which I had heard of the enthuſiaſm of Roubiliac; an enthuſiaſm which, by the bye, was never accounted a defect in an *Artiſt*. He anſwered, that, "as he felt it not to
"that extent, he could not expreſs it—
"that, if he worked on a thouſand
"blocks, they remained but dead forms—
"that a ſpark of even natural life, which
"he

"he could not produce, ſeemed to ex-
"ceed them all,"—and added, that,
"perſons of my order might rather ex-
"cite wonder, who, when they were ap-
"pointed to be the means of conveying
"life, both ſpiritual and eternal, to ra-
"tional creatures, were too often found
"talking ſo coolly and indifferently
"about it."

One cannot wonder to hear ſuch a man as Bacon ſpeak thus, all things conſidered; ſince objects to us are great or ſmall by compariſon. A native of the South Seas will fix his attention upon ornaments of bones and ſhells, while the European, pitying his ſimplicity, will continue to eſteem and ſecure his jewels. But the Scriptures teach the Chriſtian to riſe ſtill higher; they ſhew him a pearl of great price, and teach him to account every thing but as loſs in *compariſon* of it. It is then that he looks at man as the Pſalmiſt did*; and

* Pſ. xxxix.

finding

finding the poverty and abſolute bankruptcy of his preſent ſtate, he turns to God and his word, ſaying, "Now, Lord, "what wait I for? my hope is in thee." Like the philoſopher of old, he knows he has *found* the thing he ſought; and though the many may ſtill be crying around him, "who will ſhew us any good?" he feels it the preſent reward of a ſound profeſſion, that he can cry ευρηκα!

"He who ſtands on a height," ſays a ſhrewd obſerver, "ſees farther than "thoſe who are placed in a bottom; "but let him not fancy that he ſhall "make them believe all he ſees." Superficial thinkers who heard Bacon expreſs ſentiments ſo remote from their own, and were unacquainted with his feeling and cheerfulneſs, might imagine they proceeded from inſenſibility or melancholy: but it would be well if they would conſider that ſuch ſentiments were the natural reſult of a mind realiſing and embracing infinitely greater things

things—things which when thus realiſed to the mind, muſt make that mind feel the little gems of time as comparatively inſignificant; though it ſoberly and ſcripturally reſolved to preſerve for them that place they ought to occupy.

Far from religious zeal, however grand its object, be the fanaticiſm which would burn an Alexandrian Library, mutilate a production of genius, or attempt to remove it from the place it ought to hold among rationals. Blind fury is not chriſtian zeal; nor taſteleſs vulgarity pure religion; nor ſhould the abſurdities which have grown upon it, like excreſcences on a beautiful human face, be aſſociated with its real ſymmetry, as ſet forth in its ſtandard the SCRIPTURES. Let the objector ſhew any thing of this kind ſanctioned by that ſtandard, and then he will bind us either to ſhew that he miſtakes the ſenſe, or we muſt yield to the argument: againſt all ſuperſtitious or fanatical inventions in religion, we are

as ready as our oppoſers to proteſt; but perhaps, it might moderate the eagerneſs with which ſome bring forward theſe excreſcences, if they would attend to a weighty remark of one who cannot be ſuſpected of favouring fanaticiſm.

"Whilſt the infidel mocks at the ſu-
"perſtitions of the vulgar, inſults over
"their credulous fears, their childiſh er-
"rors, or fantaſtic rites, it does not occur
"to him to obſerve, that the moſt pre-
"poſterous device by which the weakeſt
"devotee ever believed he was ſecuring
"the happineſs of a future life, is more
"rational, than unconcern about it.
"Upon this ſubject nothing is ſo abſurd
"as indifference—no folly ſo contemp-
"tible, as thoughtleſſneſs and levity*."

But to return, I expect the ſanguine Amateur will object to the ſentiments which have been expreſſed; I know the

* Paley's Principles of Moral and Political Philoſophy, Vol. II. p. 100.

ſubject

ſubject is delicate, the treatment unpopular:

> Periculoſæ plenum opus aleæ
> Tractas; et incedis per ignes
> Suppoſitos cineri doloſo.

and I imagine I ſee ſome future offended Orator riſe up, and, taking the fine arts for his ſubject, I hear him expatiating upon them as the ornaments of a nation—as a ſtandard of its improvement—as not only drawing forth the powers of the mind, but as evidences of its vaſt capacity. He ſhews the multitude of individuals they ſupport—the innocent pleaſure they afford—the high patronage they have had—the immortality they have conferred—the ſuperior taſte of their admirers, the degraded minds of others, &c. &c. &c. We applaud the diſcourſe;—we are ſatisfied with our fixing upon what is ſo truly excellent and ſublime, and, pitying thoſe

duller mortals who cannot riſe ſuperior to the notions and creeds brought from their nurſeries, we cry "Let the arts "flouriſh!"

But a little calmer conſideration is neceſſary here: for, allowing this declamation of our orator to be a fair, yet is it a *full* ſtatement of the matter before us? Having mentioned a farther view of the ſubject as expreſſed by my late invaluable friend, may I not, on a review, be allowed to offer a few obſervations in vindication of it? For as to the abuſe of the arts in inflaming the paſſions, adminiſtering to ſuperſtition, or inſulting devotion, morality, or lawful government, it is too groſs to need animadverſion.

If, after ſuch warm panegyrics on the fine arts, a thinking man perceives their comparative excellence hoiſted beyond its limits in the moral ſcale—if he obſerve them take ſuch hold of the minds of their admirers that the proſ-

pect

pect is cloſed here—and that they have, like thoſe of old, in veneration of meaner objects, "turned their backs to the Temple of the Lord*."—I ſay IF ſuch things be, and be obſerved by a Chriſtian, and eſpecially by a Chriſtian Miniſter, ought he not to feel on ſuch an occaſion a portion of that ſpirit which ſtirred within *him* who ſtood on Mars-hill, and boldly reproved the blind devotions of the place?—Ought he not to addreſs them in ſome ſuch language as this?

Ye modern Athenians, devoted, like the ancients, to your idols, while HE who ſhould be the object of your ſupreme regard ſeems an UNKNOWN GOD! The ancients demand our pity in this reſpect; the ſparks which theſe children of the night ſtruck in their moral darkneſs, might naturally gain *their* higheſt attention; they had no ſtandard, as we have, of eſtimating the comparative

* Ezekiel viii. 16.

weight

weight and worth of things; but "let "us who are of the day be ſober."—Let the arts live; but let not the man periſh! Let the arts flouriſh; but let not the man fade; and, loſt in an undue admiration of their charms, be found at length fruitleſs and ſpeechleſs before his Judge!

To ſee a guilty, dying, and reſponſible creature — capable of enjoying and glorifying his Maker—created for this end, and though fallen away from his God, yet provided with means for returning to his favour and image—to ſee ſuch an one, having but a ſhort interval for accompliſhing this his greateſt work, yet totally occupied and infatuated by his taſte for the evaneſcent charms of Sculpture, Painting, Muſic, &c.—waſting his only opportunity in the admiration of ſhadows and ſounds, while impending and everlaſting realities are forgotten, if not deſpiſed:—to hear him offering apologies for ſuch a conduct,

drawn

drawn from the innocence and excellence of the objects by which he is thus blinded, bondaged, and infatuated,—is, to ſay the leaſt of it, a ſtriking and prodigious inſtance of his fallen and miſerable condition.

Were a criminal under condemnation, and allowed but a ſhort interval before the ſentence of death was executed; and could he obtain not only pardon, but preferment, if he properly applied for theſe during that ſpace of time; what ſhould we think of the man, though in other reſpects ſober and rational, if, inſtead of improving his opportunity, he waſted it in placing pictures and images round his cell, or liſtening to the ſongs of the next priſoner! And, if in addition to this, he were angry whenever his friends reminded him of the infatuation; treating their remonſtrances as enthuſiaſtic and irrational!

It is not our fond opinions and unfounded conjectures as to the propriety

or

or probability of this ſtatement, which ought to decide in our minds as to the truth of it; but the expreſs declarations of that Judge before whom we muſt all ſhortly ſtand. He has ſhewn ruin coming on the *neglecter*, as certainly as on the oppoſer, of his grace. The benighted loiterer, when carried away by a flood, or periſhing in a pit, will receive but ſmall conſolation that he did not waſte his day in bed, but in a cabinet or concert. Nor does the ſnare ever become more dangerous than when reputation, ſplendour, and the abſtract innocence and excellence of it, tend to quiet any alarm in the conſciences of men.—Perimus in *licitis*.

Who ſhall roll for us the ſtone from the door of a ſepulchre which entombs ſuch multitudes! and multitudes, not of the vulgar only, but of Geniuſes, of Scholars, of Politicians, and of Philoſophers! Here, among other views of it, the ſuperiority of religion appears—a ſuperiority

rity which needs not rank and talents to help out its effect. Produce ONE true diſciple of our great Teacher, though the meaneſt, as to his natural capacity and education, yet this man, knowing his ground, cannot but feel the deepeſt pity for his ſcorners. To each inſulter he might juſtly reply in the words of our great Poet:

> Fain would I ſomething ſay, yet to what end?
> Thou haſt nor Ear, nor Soul to apprehend
> The ſublime notion, and high myſtery.

"I ſee," ſays he, "that, if the goſpel "be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; "in whom the god of this world hath "blinded the minds of them which be-"lieve not"—directing their attention to ſome periſhing frivolity or other, "leſt the light of the glorious goſpel "of Chriſt, who is the image of God, "ſhould ſhine into them." On the contrary, ſuch a man elevated, in fact, by his

his graſp of mind, ſurveys the proſpect before him. He, like the Patriarch, realiſing the approaching danger, "provides an Ark to the ſaving of his "houſe"—like Moſes, he is not to be cheated with the "pleaſures of ſin for "a ſeaſon, but endures, ſeeing Him who "is inviſible"—like Abraham, he goes forward from a ſhadow to a certainty. The enchantment is broken—the lie is detected—he feels a full conviction what it is to "become a man, and put away "his childiſh things." Feeling his natural weakneſs, he learns that, man muſt cling in order to climb; he riſes like the feeble vine on a wall of ſalvation; and thus both the rationality and ſuperiority of true religion is ſenſibly and infallibly demonſtrated, at leaſt to his own heart.

So common is the fact, that I think no unprejudiced obſerver who regards this ſubject as it reſpects the poor, but muſt have been ſtruck with the ameliorating and elevating effect of true religion

religion with reſpect to them. Even the moſt ſqualid wretch found among them, whoſe habits of ſtupidity, ſenſuality, and wild diſorder, have ſunk him below the brutes; ſuch a one may be ſometimes ſeen riſing by religion into a rationality that ſurpriſes the obſerver. The man awakes and erects himſelf; he looks upward; he abſtracts and compares; and acting upon his new and higher ſentiments, becomes, to all intents, a true moral philoſopher.

In a word, if to purſue the *beſt end* in the choice of the *fitteſt means* be a juſt definition of Wiſdom, then, in ſpite of all miſrepreſentation, religion in exerciſe, like Bacon's religion, marks the truly wiſe man: and, to feel this wiſdom bring ſatisfaction home to the heart—directing it to ſubſtantials, and breaking thoſe enchantments of life which at firſt entice, often betray, and never could ſatisfy, is to riſe to the character of a happy and ſuperior man. On the

con-

contrary, for any one to repreſent ſuch a principle as contracting the mind, while it actually expands and elevates it, is like aſſerting, that he who is capable of ſurveying a proſpect before him, is more limited in his views and faculties than another whoſe purblind eye can diſcern nothing but what is brought cloſe to it. Or to treat a reſolution to maintain and act upon ſuch a principle, as weak or irrational, is, as if one ſhould affirm that, it would have been wiſer if the Prodigal had determined to ſtay and periſh with the ſwine, than that he ſhould at length have "*come to himſelf*," and returned to his Father.

"Still," ſays the objector, "Do I not "ſee religioniſts gloomy, contracted, ſu-"perſtitious, and ſometimes falſe?" Look again at the remarks on the identity of ſound religious principle, and the accidents which tend to obſcure it, and your objection is anſwered.—"But if Bacon "roſe ſuperior to theſe in cheerfulneſs

"and

"and liberality, were not his ſentiments "rather cynical and monkiſh reſpecting "the arts?"—Not at all.—Had he been more independant and unencumbered, I cannot doubt but that both his taſte and his conſcience would have agreed in placing an organ, a painted window, or a monument, in his church, in adding a few ſelect pieces to his collection; in increaſing the portraits of his friends; in turning his garden walk; or in directing the ſtyle of his alcove.—"Where then "did he differ from the generality of "thoſe whom he ſaw come to him as "an artiſt?" I reply, he differed, *toto cælo:* he would have treated theſe momentary trifles, to uſe his own expreſſion, but as his "*toys*," while his *treaſure*, and conſequently his heart, would have been in heaven.

I have to apologize to the Reader for having carried theſe reflections to a far greater length than I intended. But if they illuſtrate and recommend the piety

piety of the character preſented—if they in any degree atone for the great waſte of my own life in the purſuit of ſounds and ſhadows—if they warn ſome youth againſt the charms preparing on the continent,

> Baited with reaſons not unplauſible,
> To wind into the eaſy-hearted man,
> And hug him into ſnares.

—if, finally, while the light is obſcured by the ſmoke of that incenſe which aſcends on all ſides to the idol of the day, my feeble efforts may be accepted with his, who cried, "If Baal be God, ſerve "him; but if Jehovah be God, ſerve "him;" I ſhall rejoice in having made them, however they may be miſunderſtood or miſrepreſented.

FINIS.

NOTES.

[Note A. Being a ſpecimen of the fables and epitaphs, mentioned page 57.]

THE MIRROR AND THE PICTURE,

A FABLE.

A MIRROR placed in a Painter's ſtudy, thus vaunted itſelf againſt a DESIGN on the Eaſel: "Can you," ſays the Mirror, "covered with blots and ſcratches, "pretend to vie with ME, who exhibit ſo preciſe an "image of every thing that comes before me! and "where the variety is as great, as the reſemblance is "exact!"—"I grant," replies the Canvas, "that all "my excellence conſiſts in faithfully returning what-"ever is committed to my charge; but it might ſerve "as a check to your pride to conſider, that, after you "have been the companion of the wiſeſt and beſt of "characters, you are ready to admit a Fool, or embrace "a Harlot."

MORAL.

The ſame objects and events which the ſuperficial ſuffer to paſs without a trace left behind, become a fund of knowledge to the diligent; which, being enriched with principle, and fixed by habit, they ſtand among mankind a repoſitory of all that is wiſe, and an example of all that is good.

EPITAPHS.

On one who had been a Profligate.

SATAN's captive, long enchain'd,
All the viler paſſions reign'd;
From this tyranny releas'd,
Say not, "*Miracles are ceas'd.*"

On a pious Youth.

PRECIOUS plant of heavenly grace,
Waiting here a little ſpace,
While the wintry months forlorn
Paſs, and Spring's ſweet gales return;
Then beneath propitious ſkies,
Thou in living bloom ſhalt riſe.

On ——.

WHY write we Genius, Truth, or Senſe,
Or Taſte, or Wit, or Eloquence,
Or Chriſtian Virtues on this Stone!—
Thy Name includes them every one.

Mr. B.'s REMARKS ON SCULPTURE.

From Dr. Rees's Edition of Chambers's Dictionary,
As mentioned in the Memoirs, p. 56.

(B.)

"It is probable that *ſculpture* is more ancient than painting; and if we examine the ſtyle of ancient painting, there is reaſon to conclude, that *ſculpture* ſtood firſt in the public eſteem; as the ancient painters have evidently imitated the ſtatuaries, even to their diſadvantage; ſince their works have not that freedom of ſtyle, more eſpecially with reſpect to their compoſition and drapery, which the pencil might eaſily acquire to a greater degree than that of the chiſel; but as this is univerſally the caſe, it cannot be attributed to any thing elſe beſides the higher eſtimation of the works on which they formed themſelves.

"Which is the more difficult art has been a queſtion often agitated. Painting has the greateſt number of requiſites, but at the ſame time her expedients are the moſt numerous; and, therefore, we may venture to affirm, that, whenever *ſculpture* pleaſes equally with a painting, the ſculptor is certainly the greateſt artiſt. *Sculpture* has indeed had the honour of giving law to

all the ſchools of deſign, both ancient and modern, with reſpect to purity of form. The reaſon, perhaps, is, that being diveſted of thoſe meretricious ornaments by which painting is enabled to ſeduce its admirers, it is happily forced to ſeek for its effect in the higher excellencies of the art: hence elevation in the idea, as well as purity and grandeur in the forms, are found in greater perfection in *ſculpture* than in painting.

" Beſides, whatever may be the original principles which direct our feelings in the approbation of intrinſic beauty, they are, without doubt, very much under the influence of aſſociation. Cuſtom and habit will neceſſarily give a falſe bias to our judgment: it is, therefore, natural, and in ſome meaſure reaſonable, that thoſe arts which are temporaneous, ſhould adapt themſelves to the changes of faſhion, &c. But *ſculpture*, by its durability, and conſequent application to works of perpetuity, is obliged to acquire and maintain the eſſential principles of beauty and grandeur, that its effect on the mind may be preſerved through the various changes of mental taſte.

" It is conceived, that it will ſcarcely admit of a queſtion, whether the ancients or moderns have moſt excelled in this art; the palm having been ſo univerſally adjudged to the former. To determine in what proportion they are ſuperior is too difficult an attempt. Wherever there is a real ſuperiority in any art or ſcience, it will in time be diſcovered; but the world, ever

ever fond of exceſs, never ſtops at the point of true judgment, but dreſſes out its favourite object with the ornaments of fancy, ſo that even every blemiſh becomes a beauty. This it has done by ancient *ſculpture* to ſuch a degree as not to form its judgment of *that* by any rules, but to form an opinion of *rules* by the example. As long as this is the caſe, modern art can never have a fair compariſon with the ancient. This partiality to the ancients is ſo ſtrong as to prevent almoſt all diſcrimination; and is the ſole reaſon, why many antiques, that now ſtand as patterns of beauty in the judgment of moſt connoiſſeurs, are not diſcovered to be copies. This is not more important than it is eaſy to be perceived by a judicious eye; for wherever there is a grandeur or elegance to an eminent degree in the idea and general compoſition of a ſtatue, and when the execution of the parts (called by artiſts the treating of the parts) betrays a want of taſte and feeling, there is the greateſt reaſon to conclude, that the ſtatue is a copy, though we were ever ſo certain of its antiquity. And ſurely if evidence of a picture's being a copy proportionably diminiſhes its value, the ſame rule of judgment may be no leſs properly applied to a ſtatue. Modern and ancient art can never, therefore, be fairly compared, till both are made to ſubmit to the determination of reaſon and nature. It may be obſerved, that the ancients have chiefly confined themſelves to the ſublime and beauti-

ful; and whenever a pathetic ſubject has come before them, they have ſacrificed expreſſion to beauty. The famous group of Niobe is one inſtance of this kind; and, therefore, however great our partiality to the ancients may be, none can heſitate to affirm, that, whenever the moderns ſhall unite great expreſſion with great beauty, they will wreſt the palm out of their hands."

Dr. Rees adds, "The Editor is indebted for the preceding ingenious remarks to Mr. Bacon, an artiſt of very diſtinguiſhed eminence in his profeſſion."

From Dallaway's Anecdotes of the Arts in England,
As mentioned in the MEMOIRS, p. 17.

(C.)

"THE works of Bacon, Banks, Nollekins, Wilton, and Flaxman, will reſcue the preſent age from being totally indebted to foreigners for perfection in ſtatuary. His preſent majeſty at Chriſtchurch, a buſt, by the *firſt* mentioned, has the ſtrength of Bernini."

"In the Hall at All Souls is a Statue of Judge Blackſtone, ſitting and habited in his magiſtratical character, which is indeed full of ſpirit and dignity. It commands attention, and expreſſes importance. But the queſtion reſpecting the coſtume will occur to moſt ſpectators; and Bacon impoſed a hard taſk upon himſelf

himſelf when he undertook ſuch a profuſion of wig and ermine. Perhaps, ſo rigid an adherence to verifimilitude may be in moſt inſtances relaxed, with happier effect, if not totally diſpenſed with. Nothing however between an exact repreſentation of the dreſs of the times and the true antique, ſhould be admitted in ſtatuary. Kent's fancy dreſs for Shakeſpear in Weſtminſter Abbey, and of the Duke of Somerſet at Cambridge, habited as if he had lived in the reign of Charles the Firſt, are incorrect. In St. Paul's Cathedral the ſtatues of Johnſon and Howard, both by Bacon, are in oppoſite ſtyles. The Philoſopher is in the habit of an Athenian, gigantic, rather than coloſſal, whilſt the head of the Philanthropiſt is dreſſed like that of a gentleman of our own times——But the full dreſs of an Engliſh Judge has inſuperable diſadvantages; and few artiſts would have ſucceeded ſo well as Bacon."

"At Chriſtchurch are buſts of General Guiſe, Archbiſhop Robinſon, Biſhop Barrington, &c. and at Pembroke College one of Dr. Johnſon, all by Bacon, and elaborately finiſhed. For a very memorable improvement in ſepulchral ſtatuary we are indebted to him. The idea of repreſenting the virtues of the deceaſed by ſymbolical figures, if not original, is well applied."

"Bacon has adopted this mode very happily, though not without repetition of his firſt thoughts; and has attained to nearly an equal degree of perfection

tion in ſeveral of his emblematical figures, which are ſeen in Weſtminſter Abbey, the Abbey church at Bath, and Briſtol Cathedral, where his monument to Mrs. Elizabeth Draper (Sterne's Eliza) is exquiſitely ſimple."

"One of Bacon's laſt works was a monument for Mr. Whitbread, which is a beautiful compoſition. His figure of Benevolence is again introduced, with a variation only in the attitude. It is well worthy the antique.——But another marble, ſcarcely finiſhed at the time of his death, will ſecure him a laſting fame for originality and claſſical taſte. It is the Cœnotaph lately erected at Weſtminſter Abbey to the poet Maſon. A Muſe holding his profile on a medallion, reclines on an antique altar, on which are ſculptured, in relief, a lyre, the tragic maſque, and laurel wreath; all of the moſt correct form, as ſeen on ancient ſarcophagi of the pure ages—"

"Bacon's monument to the poet Gray is due to the claſſical deſign of his friend Maſon. That to Lord Chatham certainly diſplays a very grand group. The Britannia is the Urbs Roma, and the Thames is the Tiber of the Capitol, copied with the appropriate variation of the attributes. The monument to Lord R. Manners exhibits the antique Neptune."

"With the Engliſh ſchool of Sculpture, founded by Bacon, Banks, Nollekins, and Wilton, no nation, excepting Italy, will offer a ſucceſsful competition."

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